sudden surge in imports causing injury to the domestic industry, sufficient provisions are available in the form of anti-dumping/safeguard measures to protect the domestic industry.

Special Economic Zone to be set-up in Tamil Nadu and Gujarat

† 3077. DR. D. MASTHAN :

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have so far selected Tamil Nadu and Gujarat to set up a Special Economic Zone in first phase;

(b) if so, the reasons for selecting only these States in the first phase; and

(c) what is the total number of Special Economic Zones decided to be set up in the country alongwith the number of phases and time limit to complete them?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c) Government have approved setting up of EPZ/SEZ in the joint sector at Nanguneri in Tamil Nadu and Positra in Gujarat on the basis of proposal received from Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited and Gujarat Positra Port Infrastructure Limited, respectively. There is no proposal to set up any new SEZ by the Central Government. However, SEZs may be set up in the public, private, joint sector or by the State Governments. Some of the existing Export Processing Zones are also proposed to be converted into SEZs.

Relaxation of Import Licencing Restriction

3078. SHRI AMAR SINGH :
SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that it has opened flood gate by

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

freeing 714 items from import licencing restriction; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to ensure to protect our Industries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b) India has been following a consistent policy for gradual removal of restrictions on imports since 1991. Tariff line-wise import policy was first announced on 31-3-1996 and as on that date, import of 6161 tariff lines (at 10 digit level) out of the total number of 10202 was free. Import restrictions on 488 tariff lines were removed during the period 1-4-96 to 31-3-97. Further 391 tariff lines (at 8 digit level) were freed during the period 1-4-98 to 13-4-98 and 894 tariff lines were freed on 1-4-99. Thus removal of import restrictions on 714 tariff lines as carried out on 31-3-2000 was in continuation of the stated policy of the Government over the years. All these items have been freely importable from SAARC Countries since 1-8-98.

All imports in the country are subject to applicable rates of Customs duties and also subject to domestic laws, rules, orders, regulations, technical specifications and environmental and safety norms as applicable to domestically produced goods. This should provide adequate protection to the domestic industry.

The imports are being closely monitored and Government would strive to ensure through appropriate use of the tariff mechanism that imports do not cause any serious detriment or injury to the domestic industry.

Setting up of Special Economic Zones

† 3079. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH :
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up Special Economic Zones under the new Exim policy;

(b) if so, the total number of such zones decided to be set up;

(c) the estimated expenditure which will be made for setting up each zone; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.